JM Jason Mayfield

SERMON OUTLINE FOR PASTORS

WHY DOES JESUS MATTER?

The Fall, the Law and the Cross

> The fall is the problem that became everyone's problem, and the law showed us we could never fix it ourselves. At the cross Jesus solved both, and solved them sufficiently: there is nothing left to do but believe. My belief releases His supply.

MAIN TEXT
Colossians 2:13-14

FIRST PREACHED
August 17, 2025

SERIES
We're Building Everything on Jesus, Week 2 of 4

BY
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AT A GLANCE

THE MESSAGE

1. The Fall is the problem that became everyone's problem. Two kinds of sin (the sin you do, and the sin nature you inherit and could never have committed) and two kinds of death (physical and spiritual).
2. The Law is the opportunity that became the revelation. Given at Sinai to everyone, not only Israel. It did not work, and Joshua said so 80 years in. It increased the trespass and became our guardian until Christ.
3. The Cross is the sufficient solution. Jesus solved the fall, solved the law, and solved them sufficiently. Nothing left to do.



WATCH IT PREACHED

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READ THE ARTICLE

jasonmayfield.com/messages/why-does-jesus-matter

PREACHING NOTES

Before You Preach

This is the second message in a four-week series on building everything on Jesus. Last week answered who Jesus is. This week answers a different question: what does any of this have to do with me? The answer is laid out across three big movements of the Bible: the fall, the law and the cross.

The message covers a lot of ground in about 28 minutes. Pastor Jason told the congregation they were fitting "a 900-page theological dissertation" into one message, so keep moving. Each point could be a month of sermons; resist the urge to make it one today. The final movement is short and should land with joy: Jesus finished it, and faith receives it.

There is a lot of Scripture. Read the anchor passages aloud (Colossians 2, Genesis 2 and 3, Romans 5, Galatians 3, Romans 8) and simply cite the shorter verses in passing.

Introduction

> **COLOSSIANS 2:13-14** ESV
>
> [13] And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, [14] by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

Last week we started the series We're Building Everything on Jesus by talking about who Jesus is. Seven things you need to know about Him:

- Jesus is fully God.
- He is fully human.
- He lived a sinless life.
- He died on the cross.
- He rose from the dead.
- He will come again.
- He will judge all people.

That last point comes from Revelation 20. At the culmination of all things, the books are opened, and "the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done" (Revelation 20:12). Every sin, every missed opportunity and every good deed goes before the Lord, and the outcome is that every person finds out they are not good enough to go to heaven. It is almost a rhetorical judgment.

Illustration: Jesus' little black book. Then another book is opened: the Lamb's Book of Life. Call it Jesus' little black book. If your name is written in it, you spend eternity with God in heaven, receiving an eternal reward. "And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15). So here is what we have decided: that is not going to happen in Mobile County. We are going to take everybody we can get our hands on to heaven with us.

WHY DOES JESUS MATTER?

Today's message is called "Why Does Jesus Matter?" That is not meant with any disrespect. The first point from last week, Jesus is fully God, is reason enough. But the real question today is this: what does Jesus have to do with me? How does what He did impact us?

Look at the content of your Bible. The Gospels tell us what Jesus did. The Epistles spend their time explaining why it matters and how it impacts us. Jesus did not just die on the cross; He died on the cross for you. He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, went to the cross and rose again, not just to do those things, but to do them for you. This is a significant subject in Scripture.

THREE DISPENSATIONS

A dispensation is simply a period of time in which something was in effect. You can divide the Bible into many dispensations. Today we are looking at three:

- **The fall: the problem** (and it becomes everyone's problem).
- **The law: the opportunity** (that becomes the revelation).
- **The cross: the sufficient solution.**

By the end of this message, you will clearly understand why Jesus matters.

1. The Fall: The Problem That Became Everyone's Problem

The fall of man is one of the Assemblies of God's 16 Fundamental Truths. Citylight is an Assemblies of God church, and this is where the story of why we need Jesus begins.

Quick hit: what kind of book is Genesis? Every book of the Bible is a certain type of literature: the Psalms are poetry, 2 Kings is history, Isaiah is prophecy, Mark is a Gospel, Romans is an epistle, Revelation is apocalyptic literature. Knowing the type helps us read it well. The opening chapters of Genesis are harder to classify; they seem to move between history, poetry and prophecy, and Christians have discussed this for centuries. They also move at a lightning pace: we go from Adam to Abraham in twelve chapters. We may not have an answer to every scientific question about the beginning of Genesis. But the Bible says it, I believe it, and that settles it. Whether the earth was made in six days, six billion years, or overnight like an Amazon Prime delivery, this is what the Holy Spirit wants us to know, and He made sure it was written down.

> **GENESIS 2:15-17 ESV**
>
> 15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

God gave one command, and one warning: "in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17).

> **GENESIS 3:6-8 ESV**
>
> 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. 8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

Here sin enters the world, and there is an immediate separation between God and Adam and Eve. Read on to Genesis 3:16 and you see a second separation, between Adam and Eve themselves. (Not the subject today, but it is why you need Jesus at the center of your marriage. He brings you closer together.)

But it does not stop with Adam and Eve.

> **ROMANS 5:12 ESV**
>
> 12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—

Sin has spread to all humanity. The fall is the problem that became everyone's problem, and because of it, there is a separation between all people and the Lord.

TWO TYPES OF SIN

1. The sin we do. "Death spread to all men because all sinned" (Romans 5:12). Everyone has behaviorally participated in something that dishonors the Lord, usually by the time they can say their first few words. The first thing a baby learns to do is argue with you.

The church sometimes focuses too much on behavioral sin, the sin you do. It matters, but it is not the most important sin to get dealt with.

Illustration: you don't clean a fish before it's in the boat. We want our fish to come into the boat ready to be cooked. But you catch a fish and he is still dirty and grimy, and he still has his eyeballs. You clean him after he is in the boat.

2. The sin we inherit.

> ROMANS 5:14 ESV
>
> [14] Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

None of us can sin the way Adam sinned. None of us can eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam committed a sin that no one else could commit in that way, and yet that sin has traveled through all humanity. It is in our DNA, so to speak. Theologians call it the sin nature: a bend toward sin. It is why you want to do something even when you know it is wrong. The sin you inherit, the sin nature, is what actually separates you from the Lord.

TWO TYPES OF DEATH

Because there is sin, there is also death. Two types of sin, and two types of death.

1. Physical death. Everyone will experience it at some point. It is the natural course of life.

2. Spiritual death. Colossians 2 described us as "dead in your trespasses" (Colossians 2:13). Until you are born again into the kingdom of God through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, you are spiritually dead: a dead man walking. And spiritual death causes everything it touches to die. Every area of your life is being negatively affected to some degree.

The fall, sin entering the world, is the problem that became everyone's problem.

2. The Law: The Opportunity That Became the Revelation

Jump forward several thousand years from Adam and Eve and we come to Moses. In Exodus, God shows His power to His people and to the nations, as if reintroducing Himself to the world as the one true God. He tells Pharaoh, "for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth" (Exodus 9:16). This is the God of the Shema: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Deuteronomy 6:4).

In that process of revealing Himself, God brings His people to a mountain called Sinai (Exodus 19 and 20). There He gives an opportunity: a way to deal with the sin issue, a way to be holy, righteous, blameless and blessed. And it was not only for Israel. When Israel left Egypt, "A mixed multitude also went up with them" (Exodus 12:38), and Gentiles stood among the Jews at Sinai.

> EXODUS 19:5-6 ESV
>
> [5] Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; [6] and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."

This is where God gives the law of Moses, with the Ten Commandments as its cornerstone. The opportunity is righteousness through the law. The law essentially says: if you do right according to this standard, you will be blessed; if you do wrong, you will be cursed.

IT DOES NOT WORK

Here is the problem with this opportunity: it does not work. And we don't have to wait for the New Testament to find that out.

Joshua was "a young man" (Exodus 33:11) when he served Moses in the wilderness, and he lived to be 110 (Joshua 24:29). Near the end of his life, after watching Israel live under the law of Moses for roughly 80 years, he made a startling declaration to the people:

> **JOSHUA 24:19** ESV
>
> [19] But Joshua said to the people, "You are not able to serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins.

Joshua watched people try to achieve righteousness under the law, and he said, it does not work.

The apostle Paul explains this in his epistles:

- "For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do" (Romans 8:3). The law is weakened by the flesh. We cannot do it.
- "Now the law came in to increase the trespass" (Romans 5:20). Wherever the law is applied, the trespass seems to increase.
- Through the commandment, sin might "become sinful beyond measure" (Romans 7:13).
- "The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law" (1 Corinthians 15:56). Sin's power over you is found in the law.

Illustration: legalism. Some who grew up under legalism know this firsthand. The legalism almost made them more of a hellion. They grew up hearing "don't, don't, don't," and then went to see what they could do, do, do. That is what the law does. It increases the trespass.

Not only does the law not solve the issue of sin; it seems to make it worse.

IT BECOMES THE REVELATION

The law was the opportunity, and it did not work. But it did become a revelation. The law showed humanity that we are entirely unable to live up to God's standard.

> **GALATIANS 3:21-26** ESV
>
> [21] Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law. [22] But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. [23] Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. [24] So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. [25] But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, [26] for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

"So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith" (Galatians 3:24). The law showed us that we need something outside of ourselves to be made right with God, which brings us to the cross.

3. The Cross: The Sufficient Solution

Go back to where we started: God canceled "the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14).

At the cross of Calvary, Jesus solved our issue of sin and satisfied the legal demands of the law.

JESUS SOLVED THE ISSUE OF THE FALL

> **ROMANS 5:12-19** ESV
>
> [12] Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—[13] for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. [14] Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. [15] But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. [16] And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. [17] For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. [18] Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. [19] For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

"But the free gift is not like the trespass" (Romans 5:15). One man's trespass brought condemnation to all, but "much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17). In His finished work at the cross, Jesus accomplished a work that is much more powerful and reaches much farther than the work of Adam.

JESUS SOLVED THE ISSUE OF THE LAW

> **ROMANS 8:1-4 ESV**
>
> [1] There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. [2] For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. [3] For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, [4] in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Jesus fulfilled every requirement of the law on our behalf, "in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us" (Romans 8:4). That gives us the full rights and benefits of someone who meets every requirement of God's law. Everything granted to a person who has perfectly kept God's law is now available to you. (The next message in the series unpacks this.)

JESUS SOLVED THEM SUFFICIENTLY

Not only has Jesus solved the issue of the fall and the issue of the law, He has solved them sufficiently. Hebrews 7 says that in Jesus "a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God" (Hebrews 7:19). It says, "This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant" (Hebrews 7:22). "He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him" (Hebrews 7:25). And unlike the priests who offered sacrifices day after day, He has no need to, "since he did this once for all when he offered up himself" (Hebrews 7:27).

Sufficiently means completely. There is nothing left to do. When Jesus said, "It is finished" (John 19:30), He meant it.

OPTIONAL: READ HEBREWS 7:18-28

The original notes have the full passage. On August 17, 2025 it was summarized rather than read. Read it if time allows.

> **HEBREWS 7:18-28** ESV
>
> [18] For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness [19] (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God. [20] And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath, [21] but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest forever.'" [22] This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant. [23] The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, [24] but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. [25] Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. [26] For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. [27] He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. [28] For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

Conclusion

So how do I get the work Jesus accomplished to work in my life?

> **EPHESIANS 2:8-9** ESV
>
> [8] For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

When you put your faith in Jesus, in His finished work at Calvary, trusting that He is enough, grace releases everything you need. It surrounds you, it begins to bring your world into alignment, and the favor of God rests on you.

We believe; He supplies.

My belief releases His supply.

If you believe that, give the Lord a shout of praise.

ALTAR CALL

Invite anyone who has never put their faith in Jesus to call on Him today. The work is finished; it only has to be received.

> **ROMANS 10:13** ESV
>
> [13] For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."



ABOUT

PASTOR JASON MAYFIELD

Pastor Jason Mayfield is the Senior Pastor of Citylight Church in Saraland, Alabama, an author, and the creator of POWER 27. He has given more than 20 years to the local church and helps pastors and ministry leaders lead BIG.

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